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SAMUEL G. DIXON, M. D., LL. D., Sc. D.,
COMMISSIONER.

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LITTLE TALKS ON HEALTH AND HYGIENE BY THE COMMISSIONER.

These little chats are designed to convey to the people of Pennsylvania homely facts which may assist in the promotion of the public health. The statement of simple truths which all may understand and simple rules of conduct for individuals, families and that larger group of persons making up the public has been kept in mind in this presentation.

A VIEWPOINT TOWARD FOOD ADMINISTRATION.

Most of our foodstuffs are made up of different constituents. A potato is largely composed of starch, whereas beefsteak is largely composed of nitrogen or protein. Starch respresents so many heat-producing units, and beefsteak likewise produces its own quota.

This is so when you consider the matter from a laboratory standpoint, but if you made a test of the same values by feeding these foods to human beings, you would find the values varied greatly because of the variations of the human or organic machinery which handled them. Starch, for instance, in the cases of some individuals, passes through the digestive system without the body assimilating it and obtaining the addition of its heat units. In the cases of other individuals, the same thing would happen with beefsteak.

For this reason we must remember, when advising foodstuff for a community, that what is one man's meat is another man's poison. Thus it behooves those who have the power to regulate foodstuffs for a community to be liberal enough in drawing up their lists to meet the demands of the capabilities of the digestive system of the different individuals. In other words, one capable of making a rational selection must have a thorough knowledge of the physiology of foodstuffs.

The people of the State of Pennsylvania eat too much potato. The large proportion of starch in the composition of this vegetable produces a catarrhal condition of the digestive tract, which interferes with digestion and leaves the patient insufficiently nourished, eventually over a long series of years producing starvation.

Meat, as a rule, is also over-eaten by Pennsylvanians. Just now, however, during the tension of war we need more meat than usual.

It should also be kept in mind that meat will be more easily produced during the war than will vegetables, for our trouble will be the want of male help to carry out the continuous demands occasioned by the cultivation of vegetables during all stages from planting to gathering, whereas cattle can in great measure take care of themselves and what human help is required need not be of the highest development, either physical or mental.

HEAT AND HEALTH DURING WAR.

Heat is the first essential to life. The young of man or of the lower animals cannot in their first days in the world make from their food heat enough to sustain life, and the small nestling animals require the heat of their parents.

The cry of freezing to death for want of fuel has gone up and the responsibility been put up to government officials, railroads, etc. We have heard, however, very little about the individual responsibility of the great economical scheme before us in the time of war.

The ash pile of the poor and rich, on being exposed to a good shower of rain, assumes an almost black surface. A large proportion of it is carbon and rich in heat-producing units. The forests, near and far away, are full of good fire-wood. Near large centers of civilization we see in the fields or commons lots of wood, boxes, rubbish of various kinds, and we find in the cellars nearby expensive anthracite coal.

Many foreigners put us to shame by collecting these waste products that can be used for fuel and to-day many of them are rich in heat-producing material to see them through the winter.

Some time ago, visiting one of the large State hospitals and with a full realization of the responsibility of having thousands of patients unable to take care of themselves, I found the heat question looming up. To guard against the threatened shortage in fuel we doubled up our grates so that we could have those on which we could burn wood, soft coal or anthracite coal. This increased our chances of being able to guard against having these poor people suffer from cold during any emergency that might arise.

Before leaving there I could hear the echo of the woodman's axe felling trees that would never be of any account except for kindling wood. This wood was being stored, and as opportunity came, with the teams going to and from various points, we filled our empty wagons and hauled the wood to the heating and power plants of the institution. Therefore, today, those State institutions feel fairly comfortable as to the prospects of getting through the balance of this cold season.

Where there is a will there is usually a way, but our people do not seem to appreciate their individual responsibility. It is a pity our people do not realize that wood and coal or those combustible things that will produce heat are worth more to us today than gold dollars. I feel sure that if the heaps of ashes mentioned were covered with gold dollars there would be almost bloodshed in the scramble to collect them, but those gold dollars will not give you warmth in the very cold weather or cook food, which is essential to life. It therefore becomes obvious to anyone who will read or think that the coal in these ash piles and the wood in fields, forests or on the commons, are more valuable under the present circumstances than gold itself.

Let everyone turn his thoughts to his own individual responsibilities and see to detect any waste of combustibles and conserve them with more energy than he would conserve the almighty dollar. No ashes should leave the home that have not been screened and picked. No wooden boxes or other things that are made of combustible material should be burned or wasted in the commons, but should be stored with the greatest of care for a day that may meet you when life depends upon heat.

ENEMIES IN THE HOME.

The modern method of preparing drugs for family use has its attractions, yet it has been the cause of many deaths, often from the fact that so many drugs are put up in form and color to resemble each other. One may be innocent and the other deadly poison, as for instance, calomel, an innocent form of mercury, and bichloride of mercury, one of the most deadly of poisons.

One of these drugs might be picked up for the other in the dark or even in the day time, if the label was not carefully read by the one seeking to take the medicine. This has resulted in an innocent father killing his child or perhaps his wife, or in some cases, himself.

Another great mistake is to change a drug from one bottle to another without altering the label. It is often done in dividing up the contents of a rare drug with a neighbor. The one receiving the unlabeled bottle depends upon his memory, which often fails him and a fatal mistake results.

A very short time ago I knew of a generous doctor dividing up a rare drug he had with one of his colleagues, intending to label the bottle he kept for himself. He neglected to do so and not long after he wanted to use the drug and picked up what he believed to be the proper bottle, but which proved to contain an agent active in its powers to destroy tissue. This he dropped into his eye and only escaped having his eye destroyed by a narrow margin.

Now this is quite a common mistake and people have been made blind by this carelessness. Drugs that are most useful are, as a rule, most dangerous, and should always be kept under lock and key and plainly labeled. At present we are being robbed enough of the members of our families during the war so that we should have no patience with the killing of the innocent at home by simple carelessness, and it is this common everyday practice of confusing drug bottles that I warn you against. It can all be done away with if you will only give it reasonable attention.

WAR DANGERS.

During a great international war, such as we are in at present, we are prevented from taking ordinary precautions to guard against the transmission of disease. Notwithstanding the great interchange of men from all parts of the world we have more communicable diseases in our midst than ever before. This behooves the individual to look out for himself, otherwise he is apt to fall a victim to one of the miserable diseases which are being carried by men from all parts of the world.

In some of these places from which we are importing labor, chronic and disabling diseases are very common. For example, trachoma and ulceration of the mucous membrane of the eye which is easily transferred from one to another, which terminates in blindness. It was only a short time ago that our Government had to return a lot of laborers who came from one of the most infected trachoma centers in the world. Many of these men had gone to restaurants for their meals. Their fingers were infected from rubbing their ulcerated eyes and from these fingers they imparted this disease, trachoma, to the forks, spoons and knives and frequently to the cups and plates, often deeply fissured with cracks where the ordinary washing in cheap restaurants is not sufficient to disturb the germs which produce the disease.

Every individual, therefore, eating at a public restaurant should enter a protest against cracked cups and plates that this one source of danger might be eliminated.

THE FAMILY MARKET BASKET.

On a Saturday morning a poor woman, with her baby in arms, was returning from the town to her home in the suburbs with a well-filled market basket.

In the electric train were two extravagantly dressed gentlemen sitting together, across the aisle from the woman and child. One was evidently suffering with a bad cold, a serious infection, which the extremely changeable weather had made very prevalent. This sick individual was ignorant of sanitary laws, as well as police laws, for he was spitting the poisonous contents of the cough on the floor of the car. Directly, the two well-dressed individuals left the train at a way-station and the woman, being somewhat crowded with baby and basket in the seat, divided with another passenger, moved to the place made vacant by the two men.

She carelessly placed her basket on the floor in such a manner that it took up a portion of the poisonous sputum. The rest of the story is easily told.

The basket was carried home and placed on the kitchen table where the food to be eaten raw would be prepared for the family. The sickness of the baby in arms, and maybe other members of the family, can be left to the imagination.

To keep well, our foodstuffs must be kept clean.

THE LOSS TO OUR MILITARY FORCES BECAUSE OF ALCOHOL.

Getting the great number of men together from various parts of the country to military camps is a most difficult duty. The violent change of climate and the exchange, in many cases, to outdoor life from indoor life, without proper clothing and under unusual living accommodations, as well as the influx of new men, without isolation camps where they might be kept under observation until any contagious disease as had time to develop, are sources of danger to the men who are already in the service. Unfortunately, the recruits, under the excitement of the new life, are tempted to indulge in high living and alcohol, which condition is always bad, particularly in cases of pneumonia. Alcohol combusts in the human system and does so at the expense of other valuable foodstuffs, and therefore, should not be considered a foodstuff under the circumstances. It interferes with treatment, using the patients' strength, when this strength is most needed in resisting the disease.

Overeating and drinking are bound to increase the death rate from pneumonia. It is the duty of each one to take good care of his health so as to enable him to fight against this serious, exhaustive disease prevalent in Winter.

During the last several months, not only in military but in civil life, we have lost by death a large number of citizens by pneumonia and other diseases, where the patients' condition was due to the fact that they were overfed and over-alcoholed.

It is to be hoped that this word of warning will, particularly at this time when this terrible world's war calls for our best efforts, help us to restrain ourselves, and that our citizens in civil life will join in assisting the military authorities in carrying out their discipline, by refraining from furnishing alcohol to those who are in the service.

WINTER COLDS.

During the frigid weather, you want to keep well nourished. To do this, your meals should be taken with regularity, and you should take a moderate amount of exercise, not too near meal-time. No better form of exercise can be found than that of walking with a good brisk step and swinging of the arms. You should keep up a good circulation of blood that the digestive fluids, and the food be prepared for and assimilated by the body.

No excesses should be indulged in, particularly the taking of alcoholic beverages. You should live in pure air night and day, but the very young and the very old should not be exposed to extremely low temperatures.

Careful observance of these suggestions will do much to prevent, and at least to some extent, help pull you through congestive or even infective colds, which are prevalent when the weather is so very changeable as it is in winter in our North Atlantic climate.

"WAR BREAD."

Facing the great economics that must be practiced in the time of war and in the future as the population increases and the natural productions of the earth become depleted, it will be necessary for us to adjust what we have in the way of essentials, especially is this so of foodstuffs.

It therefore becomes important to know what combinations can be made and the relative food value of such combinations with our standard foodstuffs. One of Philadelphia's able chemists has given me a bread combination, which he has worked up with his wife's co-operation.

They use corn flour, which heretofore has been almost unknown in our domestic bakeries, and it would seem to open the way for a very large saving of our wheat flour. It must be distinctly understood first that there is a great difference between corn flour and corn meal. The corn flour in composition is practically the same as the corn meal, but it contains a little more protein and starch, and a little less moisture and fat, the shortage of fat being due to the fact that the germ is extracted before grinding. It must be further understood that you cannot replace all of the wheat flour with corn flour, as the corn contains no gluten, which is the constituent in wheat flour that makes it possible to obtain a raised dough.

However, bread and rolls made with twenty per cent. of corn flour have little or no corn taste, and this is the percentage, which has been found after long experiments, to produce the best bread. The same proportion can be used also for griddle cakes, pastry and cakes.

To make bread as it is made in the average household, where a sponge is set and no accurate measure of the flour is made, the better plan is to mix a quantity of the two flours, keep it on hand, and use the mixture instead of wheat flour. For a twenty per cent. mixture, take one quart of corn flour and four quarts of wheat flour, mix thoroughly, preferably by putting through a flour sifter three or four times. Of course, larger quantities may be mixed at one time, keeping the proper proportion. In pastry even larger proportions of the corn flour may be used. In making bread, pastry, etc., use this mixture in exactly the same proportions and treat it exactly as you would ordinary flour.

In nutritive value, the difference between the mixed-flour bread and the all-wheat-flour bread is very slight. Their food value is practically the same, and if white corn flour is used, the bread has the same appearance as the all-wheat bread.

This bread has a decided advantage for every day consumption over most of the war breads made of whole wheat, oat flakes, bran, etc., by being free of the roughage, and consequently it is not irritating when used meal after meal and day after day and one would not be apt to tire of eating it every day.

Corn flour can be obtained from grocers, or they can get it for you as it is regularly on the market and is being made by a number of milling companies and in cost should be cheaper than wheat flour. It should be ground as fine, or nearly as fine, as the wheat flour which you are in the habit of using.

This bread makes a twenty per cent. saving of the wheat with no practical loss in food value and without any of the objectionable features of the coarser meals.

SPRING TYPHOID.

The news of the loss of our transport reminds us of the way in which we are to be robbed of our young people during this war and should awaken us, who remain at home, to the necessity of guarding our lives and protecting ourselves against disasters no less dangerous. From now on, Typhoid must be carefully watched as an enemy.

Old Winter has stored the filth of the season on our hillsides and along the banks of our streams. With the melting of the snow and ice in the Spring, all of this filth will be washed into the streams and carried to our water works. This will test the filter plants to their capacities, many of which have too small a margin to care for an excessive flow of filth. Breakdowns will occur and the people must be prepared to protect themselves by boiling water for domestic purposes upon the first indication of trouble with their local water supplies.

In view of the above, the question ought to arise in the people's minds, with all the money that is being spent in the beautifying of our cities, whether or not it would not be wiser to use this money for the enlarging and improving of the purification plants so that our waters may be safe, and wait a little longer for our boulevards and parkways. We certainly must use all known ways, and where possible, devise new ones, to protect the health of the young population and to conserve what we now have from unnecessary destruction.

SOAP.

In this season and at this time when thousands of our young troops are being mobilized for the National Army and are, of necessity, exposed to unusual conditions often producing nervous chills, is the wise time to economize on soap. Again, when the cost of living is so high all along the line, it will be an economy to use less soap as it is a much abused article. It is not necessary, as so many seem to think, to have a stiff, creamy lather in order to dissolve the dirt that is filling up the pores of the skin. On the contrary, very little soap—pure soap—is required to break up the dirt and permit the water to remove it from the pores so that the glands may perform their normal duty.

The pores are the openings on the surface of the skin of the sweat glands and must be kept clear and free from either dirt, soap or any matter that would tend to interfere with their action in the elimination of perspiration. Imperfect action of the sweat glands is a source of disease, various matters accumulating in the system, which would otherwise be eliminated.

Therefore, economy in soap would not only be a saving in money but would help in saving human life, by cutting down respiratory diseases.

PENNSYLVANIA HEALTH BULLETINS.

1.	July	1909.	The Disease-Breeding Power of House-flies; Method of Prevention.
2.	Aug.,	1909.	Note on the Similarity of Barium Carbonate Poisoning and Rabies in Dogs.
3.	Sept.,	1909.	The Family Physician.
4.	Oct.,	1909.	Legal Rights and Tuberculosis. The Public Drinking Cup.
5.	Nov.,	1909.	The Germicidal Effect of Water from Coal Mines and Tannery Wheels upon Bacillus Typhosus, Bacillus Coli, and Bacillus Anthracis.
6.	Dec.	1909.	Report on the Effect of Repeated Injections of Products of the Tubercle Bacillus on Lymphatic Organs.
7.	Jan.,	1910.	Little Dangers to be Avoided in the Daily Fight Against Tuberculosis.
8.	Feb.,	1010.	The Object to be Attained by the Medical Inspection of School Children.
9.	March,	1910.	Conservation of Human Life in Pennsylvania. The Results of Four Years' Work of the Department.
10.	April,	1910.	The Biological Treatment of Tuberculosis as Conducted by the Department.
11.	May,	1910.	The Bubonic Plague, its Origin, Progress, and Means of Prevention.
12.	June,	1910.	A Retrospective Glance. 1. Susceptibility to Tuberculosis. 2. Purity of Milk. 3. Bovine Tuberculosis.
13.	July,	1910.	Experiments on Tubercle Bacilli, Old Tuberculin, and the Fluid of Dixon.
14.	Aug.,	1910.	The Conservation of Child Life in Pennsylvania.
15.	Sept.,	1910.	Obedience to Natures' Laws the Primary Defence against Disease.
16.	Oct.,	1910.	The Conservation of Infant Life in Pennsylvania.
17.	Nov.,	1910.	Pennsylvania's Standing Army of Health.
18.	Dec.,	1910.	Producers and Consumers. Pennsylvania's Tuberculosis Schools.
19.	Jan.,	1911.	The Effect of Injections of Taurin upon Tumors of Mice and Dogs.
20.	Feb.,	1911.	Some Duties, Ideals, and Opportunities of the Country Doctor.
21.	March,	1911.	Malaria: How it is Caused, and How to Get Rid of it.
22.	April,	1911.	Health.
23.	May,	1911.	The Common Fly. How it Develops. Why it must be Destroyed, and How to Destroy it.
24.	June,	1911.	Effects of Products of Tubercle Bacilli on Epithelium.
25.	July,	1911.	Five Years of Tuberculosis in Pennsylvania.
26.	Aug.,	1911.	Organization of the Pennsylvania State Department of Health.
27.	Sept.,	1011.	Tuberculosis, in the Country as well as in the City, a Disease of Bad Housing and Lack of Nourishing Food.
28.	Oct.,	1911.	The Preparation of the Biological Products Distributed by the Pennsylvania Department of Health.
29.	Nov.,	1911.	The Foundations of State Medicine.
30.	Dec.,	1911.	Experiments Tending to show the Infrequency of the Occurrence of Tubercle Bacilli in the Urine of Patients Suffering from Pulmonary Tuberculosis.
31.	Jan.,	1912.	The Baby the Most Important Problem in Modern Life.
32.	Feb.,	1912.	Insects. The Common Forms in Relation to Public Health, and Methods for their Destruction.
33.	March,	1912.	The Opportunities for the Trained Nurse in Sanitary Service.
34.	April,	1912.	How to Organize a Baby-Saving Show.
35.	May,	1912.	Drowning.
36.	June,	1912.	The Health of Suburban Residences.
36½.	July,	1912.	Report of the Austin Disaster.
37.	Aug.,	1912.	Getting Close to the People. Caring for the School Children.
38.	Sept.,	1912.	Modern Medicine and the Physician.
39.	Oct.,	1912.	Battling for Health at Mont Alto.
40.	Nov.,	1912.	Tuberculin.
41.	Dec.,	1912.	Conservation of Health. An Address.
42.	Jan.,	1913.	Municipal Sanitation.
43.	Feb.,	1913.	Tuberculosis and Our Schools.
44.	March,	1913.	The Relation of the Undertaker to the Public Health.
45.	April,	1913.	What State Control over Streams has done in Pennsylvania in seven years.
46.	May,	1913.	Troy Typhoid Fever Epidemic.
47.	June,	1913.	The Registration of Vital Statistics a Social Service.
48.	July,	1913.	Pennsylvania's Eugenic Marriage Law.
49.	Aug.,	1913.	Pennsylvania Health Legislation of 1913.
50.	Sept.,	1013.	Health and Education. An Address.
51.	Oct.,	1913.	Relation of Public Health to Industrial Welfare. An Address.
52.	Nov.,	1913.	Bathing.
53.	Dec.,	1013.	Results from the Injection of the Wax of the Tubercle Bacillus Indicating its Influence on Immunity and Susceptibility to the Tubercle Bacillus.
54.	Jan.,	1914.	The Waters of Pennsylvania. An Address.
55.	Feb.,	1914.	Reproduction and Race Betterment.
56.	March.	1914.	The State Tuberculosis Dispensary as a Social Service in Pennsylvania.
28.	Rev.April,	1014.	The Preparation of the Biological Products Distributed by the Pennsylvania Department of Health.
57.	May,	1914.	Insanitary Bath Tubs and Lavatories.
58.	June,	1914.	On Housing.
59.	July,	1914.	Medical and Sanitary Inspection of Schools of Fourth Class Districts in Pennsylvania.
60.	Aug.,	1014.	Progress in Preventive Medicine in Pennsylvania since the Creation of a State Department of Health.
61.	Sept.,	1014.	Certain Standards for Tuberculosis Dispensaries.
62.	Oct.,	1914.	On the Upfollow of Sanatorium Patients.
63.	Nov.,	1914.	Effective Rural Sanitation. End Results.
64.	Dec.,	1914.	Pennsylvania's System of Tuberclosis Dispensaries.
65.	Jan.,	1915.	Present Organization of the State Department of Health.
66.	Feb.,	1915.	Notes on Typhoid Fever in Pennsylvania for the Past Nine Years.
67.	March,	1915.	Epidemic of Typhoid Fever in Skippackville and Vicinity.
68.	April,	1915.	Diphtheria and Diphtheria Antitoxin.
69.	May,	1915.	Flies as a Factor in Infant Mortality.
70.	June,	1915.	Pennsylvania Health Legislation of 1915.
71.	July,	1915.	On the Medical Inspection of 469,000 School Children in Pennsylvania.
72.	Aug.,	1915.	The Sanitary Engineer in Public Health Work.
73.	Sept.,	1915.	Quarantine of the Home as Practised by the Department of Health.
74.	Oct.,	1015.	An Address before the Pennsylvania Water Works Association.
75.	Nov.,	1915.	An Address at the Laying of a Corner-Stone in Pittsburgh.
76.	Dec.,	1915.	On the Prevalence of Typhoid Fever in Philadelphia in the Autumn of 1915

77.	Jan.,	1916.	The Pennsylvania Department of Health Exhibit at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition.
78.	Feb.,	1916.	The Sanitary Index. A Method of Measuring Public Health Work.
79.	March,	1916.	Proper Housing Means Cleanliness. An Address in the Conference of the Pennsylvania Housing and Town-Planning Association.
80.	April,	1916.	Pennsylvania and Her Municipalities. An Address before the State Association of Boroughs.
81.	May,	1916.	The Department of Health Laboratory, and what it has done for the Physicians of the State. Read before the Schuylkill County Medical Society.
82.	June,	1916.	Fifteen Little Talks on Health and Hygiene.
83.	July,	1916.	Fifteen Little Talks on Health and Hygiene.
84.	Aug.,	1916.	Fifteen Little Talks on Health and Hygiene.
85.	Sept.,	1916.	Fifteen Little Talks on Health and Hygiene.
86.	Oct.,	1916.	Fifteen Little Talks on Health and Hygiene.
87.	Nov.,	1916.	Fifteen Little Talks on Health and Hygiene.
88.	Dec.,	1916.	Fifteen Little Talks on Health and Hygiene.
89.	Jan.,	1917.	Little Talks on Health and Hygiene.
90.	Feb.,	1917.	Little Talks on Health and Hygiene.
91.	March,	1917.	Little Talks on Health and Hygiene.
92.	April,	1917.	Little Talks on Health and Hygiene.
93.	May,	1917.	Insects.
94.	June,	1917.	Typhoid and Typhophors.
95.	July,	1917.	Infantile Paralysis.
96.	Aug.,	1917.	Administration in Typhoid Epidemics, as carried out by the Pennsylvania State Department of Health.
97.	Sept.,	1917.	Pennsylvania Health Legislation of 1917.
98.	Oct.,	1917.	President's Address. Pennsylvania State Medical Society.
99.	Nov.,	1917.	Little Talks on Health and Hygiene.
100.	Dec.,	1917.	Little Talks on Health and Hygiene.
101.	Jan.,	1918.	Little Talks on Health and Hygiene.
102.	Feb.,	1918.	Little Talks on Health and Hygiene.

NOTE:—Owing to the exhaustion of the supply, Bulletins of the above list bearing the numbers:—7, 9, 10, 33, 39, 49, are no longer available for distribution.